

# PEACE NEWS

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## LAURENCE HOUSMAN warns against the tendency to say 'Serve them Right!'

WHEN we hear of somebody (or bodies) who have done something which we regard as wrong or foolish, with bad consequences to themselves—something which we are quite sure we should never have done—we are apt to say, with a certain amount of malicious satisfaction, "Serve them right!"

And then, if we examine into the matter further—honestly and thoroughly—we may find that we share both the responsibility and the consequences, and that it serves us right, as well as the fools we have just been condemning. And when we have made that discovery, are we quite so pleased with the law of consequences—of cause and effect (for which another description is "just retribution")? Do we think it as desirable and as salutary in its workings as we did when we thought it only applied to the misdoings of others?

An example of this was given me only a few days ago; and I reacted to it in the usual way. I said, "Serve them right!" I was told, what many of my readers may already know but which I did not, that, in the early days after Hitler's rise to power, certain financiers in this country advanced him many millions of pounds at six per cent., to be expended on armaments.

Where the bulk of those armaments were to come from, under licence from what Government, I was not told. But I remembered only too well how—not earlier but later—our Government was granting licence for the export of armaments to Japan in her war of aggression against China, even when that aggression was being roundly condemned. We knew of it, and we did nothing to stop it.

In the matter of Hitler's financiers, I was told (what is now obvious) that they had made a bad investment, and that they would not get either their money back or their six per cent.: and I said, "Serve them right!"

### "Safety First"

And then I remembered how, eight years ago, under a Premier who had made "safety first" his election cry, our Government had flouted the Peace Ballot's condemnation of the private traffic in arms (condemned by a vote large enough to have won a General Election), and how a member of that Government had declared that there was no danger in the traffic because no arms went from this country without a government licence.

Since the supply of money to buy armaments is morally the same as the actual supply of them—and there may even be a closer financial connection between the two transactions, the one being made conditional on the other—I saw clearly that this was a case not of "serve them right" (the financiers only) but "serve us right"; "us" being our blind "hand-to-mouth" "safety-first" Government, and our blind "hand-to-mouth," "safety-first" electorate, which had put and had kept

that Government in power. We had got, as a result, just what we deserved.

### Not Imposed Retribution

But though, because we have deserved it, it is "just retribution," it has not been imposed on us as a punishment by any international tribunal functioning on the "holier than thou" principle.

No such competent tribunal exists today, any more than it will exist in that uncertain tomorrow when victory will accord to whichever the victor happens to be the foolscap crown of self-righteousness for the making and losing of another "peace," by the visiting of "just retribution" upon the vanquished.

It is a pity we cannot honestly make an "unconditional surrender" of the false premises on which we are wishfully marching to that illusion of victory, which will be no victory unless it is a victory over ourselves. It is a pity we cannot make a frank admission that the just retribution that has come upon us is not man's retribution but God's, due for our callous carelessness and indifference to the sacredness of human life in dealing out the means of destruction to other nations for mere profit, at a

time when the making of a world peace was still possible.

We have thus brought ourselves into the same condemnation as those—now our enemies—for whom, as customers, we then financed those means of destruction which they have since used against us.

### Directed Against Russia

We did not, of course, intend that they should be used against us. At the time when that transaction took place there was, in certain political quarters in this country, a very strong hope that they would be used against Russia, and that the letting loose of Hitler's ambitions in an eastward direction would secure such a measure of appeasement for Western Europe as would at least give us "peace in our time."

It was a miscalculation, though some of its products have gone in the direction that was intended. And of that Russia must be perfectly aware. She will have remembered it; and may, some day, very inconveniently require compensation for the damage done to her by the loan of those millions of English money, even if it was not followed up by armaments of English manufacture, exported under licence granted by an English Government—compensation in the form of an adjustment of frontiers to which we would much rather not agree, but may find it difficult to refuse. We owe Russia such a very bad debt from the days when our leading politicians said about Stalin the sort of things which they now say about Hitler.

If and when that happens, it will "serve us right," though it may have to be done mainly at the expense of another country whose borders will then be the matter in dispute. But it can't be helped; if you lie down with the dogs of war you get up with their fleas.

## The Oppressed and the New Europe

CONSIDERING that for the last three years Europe has been represented by the British press as groaning under the unspeakable tyranny of the Nazis, it is disconcerting to be warned by the same authorities that there is now a danger that "the European Charter," which Hitler and Mussolini are said to be about to propagate, may prove attractive to those to whom it is offered.

"It would be foolish of us to underrate how powerful and how dangerous propaganda of this kind can be. All over the world people are ready to be bemused by words, phrases, formulas, recipes for Utopia. No one knows this better than the Nazis, who long ago perfected as a fine art the use of verbiage as an instrument of war (News-Chronicle, Apr. 22)."

That may be true. But the question remains: How comes it that the unfortunate people who, day in day out, are suffering horrible oppression from their brutal Nazi over-lords, are liable to succumb to the allurements of this German-Italian Utopia. There are obvious reasons why we should be bemused by the words, phrases, and formulas of the Atlantic Charter. In the first place, they have no particular relation to ourselves; in the second, we naturally believe in our own good intentions. But in the good intentions of the Nazis, if the reports of their behaviour are true, why should any of their victims believe?

### Little to Choose

THE explanation is, of course, fairly simple. We exaggerate the

brutality of the Nazis, on the one hand; and on the other we carefully conceal the impression produced by our own. The ordinary Englishman is so conditioned by British propaganda that he sees the world not as it is, but as both his rulers and he desire it to be. Almost certainly his counterpart, the ordinary man of Western Europe, thinks that there is very little to choose between British and German methods.

British blockade and British bombing have, in the experience of the common man, no such evident and inherent moral superiority over German "frightfulness" as we complacently believe. In Eastern Europe, we may be certain, the common man sees nothing much to choose between the Russian and the German. Of this ambiguous attitude the spectacular example is Russia's severance of relations with the emigré Polish Government.

### Russia & Poland

THE Russian Note to Poland announcing the rupture is an unconvincing document. What could be more arbitrary than the allegation that, because the Polish request for investigation of the "Katyn massacre" followed hard upon the breaking of the story by the Germans, the Polish Government was in contact with Hitler? No less extravagant seems the assertion that the Polish request for investigation is part of a deliberate campaign for the recovery of part of the Ukraine. No refer-

## A Thing Like a Bomber

Concluding a broadcast in the North American Service on children's reactions to the war (reprinted in *The Listener*, Apr. 15), Robert Westerby said:—

**B**UT what is going to happen? Where is the acceptance of these extraordinary things and events going to take these children?

*I'm sure I don't know. I do know that sometimes it isn't amusing at all, not even bitterly amusing. I remember how I felt when I was staying with someone and the ten-year-old son of the house burst into the breakfast room with "Gosh! 200,000 Germans wiped out at Stalingrad. Super!" That makes you think, doesn't it?*

*But I believe even that is capped by something my own daughter said only the other day; something which made me think very hard. She's a normally good little girl. She reads stories and skips with a rope, and collects wild flowers and eats with a good appetite. She's a normally good little girl, who says her prayers before she goes to bed as a good little girl should. But on Saturday night she told me they had just "put in a new 'crucifix-thing' in the village church."*

*"Crucifix thing?" I said. "Yes," she said. "You know, a cross—like a bomber."*

## PACIFIST COMMENTARY EDITED BY "OBSERVER"

ence whatever is made to the ugly fact that some 8,000 Polish officers have been missing ever since the Russians joined with the Germans in the occupation of Poland; and that the Russians have never revealed their whereabouts or accounted for their disappearance.

There is no denying that the rupture of relations is a victory for German propaganda. But seeing that Russia and Germany are equally hostile to Poland, the destruction of the facade of unity between Russia and Poland reflects the real situation, however destructive it may also be of the legend of the "United Nations."

### Food Conditions

RELIABLE reports of the actual treatment of the European peoples by Germany are hard to come by. But there was a significant admission in a British official survey of the food situation (*Daily Mail*, Apr. 24) in which it is admitted that the bread ration in Italy is much smaller than in any of the occupied countries. True, one has to take into the reckoning the different dietary habits of the Italians. They eat as much pasta as bread. But, taking this fully into account, it appears that the ration of bread-grains in Italy is no higher than that in any occupied country in the West.

The reasonable conclusion is that in the matter of food Germany treats the occupied countries as well as she can. After all, she would be idiotic to do otherwise. Hitler himself cannot contemplate a future in which German strength is occupied in holding down Western Europe by main force. He is compelled by his own policy to do all he can to persuade the peoples of Europe to consent to German hegemony.

### More Solid Unity

FROM the British point of view the real danger of a German-Italian "European Charter" is not that the peoples may be deceived by specious and insincere promises of a Utopia;

(Continued on page 2)

## COMPLEMENTARY

A LIVERPOOL reader sends me a guinea for the Fund in memory of Eric Gill to complement the gift handed me at Birmingham in memory of Max Plowman. "I heartily supported your remarks on the pair of them," he writes. "It would be difficult to say to which of them we owe the most."

"My wife and I," my correspondent says, "held a small party in aid of the Fund and this sum is what we collected. We have found this an admirable way of collecting money, because 'a good time is had by all' at the same time." In other words, the collection of money thus becomes a means to strengthen the sense of community. This is, I am sure, as it should be.

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### THE EDITOR

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## Deadlock

**PARLIAMENTARY** Government in this country is in a state of stagnation. The condition is complex, though its main cause is simple and plain. A Conservative majority elected on a Neville Chamberlain policy, and in fact the lineal successor of the "National" majority of 1931, has prolonged its life through the totally different conditions of war, and intends to prolong its life until the war ends, and if possible after, under the totally different leadership of Mr. Churchill. The moral contradiction is manifest. Mr. Chamberlain's was a policy of peace by appeasement.

The domestic policy of this majority—the conservation of capitalism at all costs—made (short-term) sense only as a policy of peace at all costs. Once we were plunged in the revolutionary process of war it became nonsense. And that nonsensical policy is now fastened on the nation's back like an incubus. It operates to prevent all social development. Thus, the extremely moderate Uthwatt Report, recommending new principles of "compensation" when a national or local authority acquires land—action long overdue and upon which the possibility of a reasonable control of our domestic anarchy depends—has evidently been shelved because of the opposition of the "landowners."

These "landowners" are unworthy the name, which has a certain dignity. They are land-speculators who hope to cash in on the increased value given to land by the needs of society. Their idea of landed property is the precise opposite of the just idea of landed property. Landed property, in its just idea, imposes on the holder obligations towards society. These rapacious land-sharks seek to avoid all obligations towards society. They are opposing, tooth and nail, the modest effort made by the Uthwatt and Scott reports to have the land once more recognized as something quite different from a medium for speculation of the worst kind—the holding of the national community to ransom.

The opposition of the great industrial insurance companies to the Beveridge Report is of the same order. It is the effort to curb their barefaced exploitation of the poorest sections of the community, which has met with stubborn and successful opposition. Thus our political stagnation is caused by the worst type of decadent capitalism, which got into power on a policy of appeasement. So we are condemned to the worst of both worlds. We are deprived of the improvements we might have from war; and we have the war.

It can truly be said that anything would be better than this degenerate deadlock, to which Mr. Churchill and the Labour Party have both contributed all they can. Both have assisted this decadent capitalist caucus to clothe itself with the prestige and authority of a "National" Government. This national Government is quite unrepresentative of the country. Mr. Churchill himself, who is in a sense representative, is representative only of the nation's desire to beat Hitler; he is completely unrepresentative of its desire for at least the skeleton of a better domestic society. The parliamentary legions behind him represent nothing at all.

Probably it is too late to do anything effective about it now. The group is being prepared for post-war anarchy, suppressed by totalitarian control. But whatever can be done to break this deadlock should be done. Wherever the instinctive revulsion from "National" candidates can be canalized and expressed, pacifists should do what they can to encourage revolt. But they must have no illusions. Revolt that is effective in getting anti-Government candidates into Parliament will not bring peace itself any nearer. The effective choice today is not between war and peace but between letting the war be a process of total degeneration or making it a process from which some good may emerge.

If decadent capitalism can be prevented from sheer sabotage of urgently necessary reforms, something will have been gained. It may not bring peace nearer to us now, but it may help us towards the possibility of a peaceful society afterwards.

## Who Can Police Europe? A PACIFIST COMMENTARY

(Continued from page one)

but that the promises may be neither wholly specious nor wholly insincere. The danger is that Germany may have more that is really solid to offer Europe as a whole than Britain has; and certainly more than the precarious combination of Britain, USA, Russia, and China.

The example of Italy is pertinent in this connection. British propaganda represents that Germany treats Italy as a subject people. And it may be true that Italian sentiment is not very different from that of an occupied country. But it is not in the least pro-British. On the contrary, the average Italian feels, and is justified in feeling, that he has had nothing but a raw deal from England, and that he never will have anything better until a united Europe can talk to Britain on equal terms, or something more. Germany, with all its faults and all its psychological ineptitude, appears in Italian eyes as the champion of European unity in its most urgent and matter-of-fact meaning—a Europe that is secure from war.

## Policing Europe

**THAT** is the crux, as Lord Lytton lately argued in the House of Lords. How is Europe to be secured from war? Is permanent European peace conceivable by any arrangement in which Germany does not actively participate?

Our official policy is that Germany has to be annihilated. But it is fairly certain that the average European does not believe that Germany can be annihilated. Still less does he believe that a Europe in which a completely defeated Germany is held down by main force for a few generations is likely to be a peaceful Europe. He does not believe that everything will be different this time, and that the United Nations, having forced Germany to "unconditional surrender," will this time remain united. They will quickly get tired of the job of policing Europe.

It is not a job for democracies anyhow; and if the United Nations persist with it, they will cease to be democracies. That is a remote perspective, which concerns Britons and Americans much more intimately than it does the European peoples, which have in the main, ceased to be democratic and become authoritarian. I believe the average realistic European says to himself that a peaceful Europe in whose ordering Germany does not

actively participate is an impossible and dangerous dream.

## A Historian's View

**MR. G. M. TREVELYAN**, the historian, now Master of Trinity, discusses the problem in the Daily Mail (Apr. 22). He discusses it, of course, from the accepted British point of view, but more soberly than journalists are apt to do.

"The first condition of attaining permanent peace is to win this war completely. A settlement, however satisfactory otherwise, would be fatal if it left the German and Japanese war-machines in being, and their governments able to prepare another war after a period of recovery."

"There was perhaps something to be said for Lord Lansdowne's proposal in the middle of the last war for a peace of compromise with the partially civilized and highly traditional empires of Germany and Austria-Hungary; but, however that may have been, there is nothing now to be said for a peace that would leave the Nazi system in being. For it has no European tradition, and no international morality whatever; it preaches and practises a new philosophy which regards non-Germans as having no rights at all."

"In the first place then, the great Powers—Russia, the United States, Great Britain, and China—must stand on guard for an indefinite number of years to prevent the re-arming of Germany and Japan. This guardianship must in the first instance be the business of the great Powers, because the smaller Powers of Europe, after long starvation, torture, slavery, and massacre at the hand of Germany and her vassals, will only be able to recover under the shield of firm and certain protection against the return of the enemy."

## Dictatorship or — Peace

**THAT** is an example of wishful thinking, particularly significant in a sober, though Whig, historian. The conventional propaganda picture of Europe is accepted without criticism. Equally without criticism the conventional optimistic picture of American political idealism is accepted. Not a thought is given to the crucial problem whether the Anglo-Saxon democracies can stand on guard for an indefinite number of years to prevent German re-arming and remain democracies.

In fact, the chances that the USA will behave as Mr. Trevelyan believes it will are diminishing every day. Congress is steadily whittling down the executive powers of the President. The Republicans grow daily more confident that they will win the next Presidential election. All the signs point to a reversion to isolationism. And behind it all I sense a real determination that USA shall remain a democracy, and a stubborn intuitive sense, which I believe to be well-grounded, that a democracy cannot undertake the task of policing the world and remain a democracy.

"Faites un roi," said a famous French politician to the French democracy in 1910. "sinon, faites la paix." In modern terms, Have a dictator, or pursue a policy of peace.

## Changed Situation?

**SIGNIFICANT**, too, in Mr. Trevelyan's article is his belated admission that it might have been a good thing if Britain had accepted Lord Lansdowne's proposal for a compromise peace during the last war. I do not remember that Mr. Trevelyan supported the proposal when it was made. Twenty years after he begins to realize its wisdom. But it does not suggest to him that what was wisdom then might be wisdom now. No, he appeals to the precedent only to show how completely the position has changed. But wherein has it changed essentially? Precisely what Mr. Trevelyan is saying about the Germans now, he and his similars were saying about Germany in 1917. Then, as now, the British press was saying that the Germans had no international morality. No doubt, since that time, the Germans have gone from bad to worse. But have not we also?

The major change in the situation, from the Trevelyan angle, is that American democracy is a much bigger factor in the situation than British democracy. And just as British democracy would not march to the support of the League of Nations, so American democracy will probably not march to the support of a Four-Power Alliance. We had really better beware lest our barren policy of "unconditional surrender" threatens Europe with such anarchy that the German-Italian European Charter will not merely appear, but actually be, the only salvation for Europe.

## Shocks in India

**THE** Indian courts have decided that the ordinance was illegal under which Gandhi and his Congress colleagues were imprisoned. The Government has put that right, as might be expected. Less to be expected was Mr. Jinnah's proposal of direct conversations between Gandhi and himself. This, it may be remembered was precisely what Gandhi himself proposed frequently during the months before his arrest. Mr. Jinnah was speaking at the annual conference of the Moslem League. His language must have come as a shock to Delhi.

"Why should not the country say 'Unite, and drive the British out? It is no use appealing to other nations of the world. What is to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing to me direct? Let us sit as two equals and come to a settlement'" (Observer, Apr. 25).

Mr. Jinnah is an astute politician. As such he does not bother to explain why he did not previously respond to Mr. Gandhi's offer. At a guess, the further loss of face by the British Government by the failure of the Arakan campaign is the prime cause of the new development.

## The Export of Culture

by

JOHN SCANLON

*Have we reached a turning point in history? In posing this question I am not thinking of one of those turning points in the war which are a bi-monthly feature of all war commentaries. What I have in mind is the announcement that an anonymous donor has made a gift of £30,000 to be devoted solely to the export and import of culture.*

**LET** us look at the facts as told in our newspapers. An anonymous donor has given the money. He may be a mute, inglorious Milton. On the other hand, he may be a mute and still more inglorious Oil King.

Contrary to custom, this gift has not been made to any of our seats of learning or even to that firm which prints the basis of all our culture hitherto—the Bible. That in itself marks a turning point; but when we learn that the money has virtually been left to the Foreign Office to be devoted, not to coloured people, but to Latin Americans, the thing becomes more important.

Hitherto the Foreign Office, which has always worked hard to avoid having wars with Indians, Chinese, Russians, Turks, and Prussians, has never had to avoid war with a single Latin American Republic.

Those earlier affairs with Drake did not really count. After all they were religious affairs exclusively. The new Protestant nation of Britain was simply robbing the Spaniards because the Spaniards, as Catholics, not already robbed the original Americans—the Red Indians.

In those days the first of the great Cecils never blessed Drake's adventures. In fact, until the ships returned with their merchandise he seemed hardly aware they had been away. Even then Sir William would not have mentioned the matter publicly had not the sailors begun to sell the stuff without the blessing of Church or State.

## POSSIBILITY OF WAR

Peace-lovers, of course, will hope that the Foreign Office, as the result of trying hard to avoid a war over Latin American culture, will not land us into one. Yet we cannot ignore the

historic fact that practically all our best wars have come upon us since we got a Foreign Office.

But here arises the difference. Never in all history has the Foreign Office had £30,000 to spend solely on culture. True, £20,000 is to be spent on a building first; but even with £10,000 worth of culture it should be able to achieve wonderful results.

Hitherto our relations with the Latin Americans have lacked this cultural side. True, we opened banks to lend them money to buy our goods and, of course, to collect interest on the loans. We sent the then Prince of Wales to the Argentine in 1930; and they still refuse to go to war.

This is not the only case in which differences of outlook and temperament could be smoothed out with culture. For instance, Latin Americans have quite different ideas on such diverse affairs as Horses, Oil Wells, and General Elections. In the last war crude horsemen of the Pampas actually said it was cruel to round up mustangs to be sent to drag their entrails in the mud of Flanders. A little culture could have proved to them that a horse dying thus had died in a Crusade.

## OIL AND ELECTIONS

Then think of the differences of outlook on oil wells and elections. In Britain, for instance, we would trust any investor to run an oil well, but we would not allow him to count his own votes at an election. In the interests of probity, the counting has to be done by the State.

In Mexico the process is reversed. They think the Government can be trusted to run the oil wells, but nothing would induce them to let the Government count the votes. In the last Presidential election each candidate counted his own and both won. The candidate with most guns won in the end and promptly announced he was prepared to take his stand with the Democracies in their fight against Dictatorship.

But until there is at least £10,000 worth of culture spread over Latin America there will always be a lack of stability in the Exchanges. For instance, What would have happened if all the Dictators of Latin America had failed to take their stand for Democracy and had gone over to the Dictators? If the British Council can ensure that only good Dictators,

who believe in Democracy, are allowed to count the votes, the £10,000 will be well spent.

## TRADE RETURNS

Yet a word of warning may be necessary. For although we may take it that the decision to spread culture in Latin America is in no way associated with base commercialism, the fact must be faced that the exports and imports of culture must enter the trade returns.

Supposing, for instance, in attempting to show our idea of culture we export the books of Dean Swift, Hobson on Imperialism, the diaries of Wilfred Scawen Blunt and the bound volumes of Peg's Own Paper. Say these are entered as value £30,000.

Now let us fully realise that at this moment the Latin Americas are bulging with poets. If they insist on sending cultural poems to the value of £35,000 at par that will leave us with an unfavourable trade balance of £5,000, and the Latin Americas with a sterling balance of £5,000.

Supposing, as might happen, there is a flight from the £2, that sterling balance might become £5,000,000. If that happened there would arise the need for a trade agreement to regulate the balance of cultural imports, and this in turn would involve the Foreign Office in working hard to keep us out of a war.

This is not alarmist talk. All must remember what happened when Hollywood culture could not be shown unless with a fixed number of feet of British culture on every screen.

And then there is Mr. Sumner Welles. He, too, has been working very hard for years to spread American culture in South America, and as a result of the war has been able to exclude the cultures formerly sent by the Axis Powers and, indeed, those sent by Britain.

Neither the Peace Pledge Union nor Peace News itself is necessarily committed to views expressed in the articles we publish. (Still less does the acceptance of advertisements imply endorsement of any views expressed or implied therein or PPU connection with the matter advertised). Contributions are welcomed, though no payment is made. They should be typewritten, if possible, and one side only of the paper should be used. They may not be returned unless a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed, nor can we undertake to acknowledge all correspondence owing to increased cost of postage.



## Letters to the Editor

Owing to the large number of claims on our severely limited space, correspondents are urged to keep their letters very brief, and preferably under 250 words.

## Service of C.O.s

I fail to see how, because the war is becoming more totalitarian, or because the law recognizes the CO, it should make any difference in conscientious objection.

The so-called "die-hard" is not a person who refuses to do anything, but one who refuses to do anything as a condition of being exempted from military service. If a person believes that it is wrong to be conscripted for military service then it would appear logical not to accept a direction to some other employment as an alternative to military service.

Unless one concedes the right of the Government to conscript men for war, the question of whether the alternative offered is constructive or not does not arise. The absolutist does not concede to the Government the right to conscript its citizens for war, and therefore refuses to accept any alternative it may offer in place of it. This is not done with the desire not to serve his fellow countrymen, but in the belief that the best service he can render to a country harnessed for total war is to stand against it. Where the tribunal grants him unconditional exemption, which the law allows, then the point at which he can best serve his fellow men is probably more difficult to decide than in other cases, but whatever the decision of the tribunal this stand for the absolutist must be his first constructive work. A work quite as constructive as that of the early Christian who refused to burn a pinch of incense in front of a bust of Caesar.

The service that is made at the price of a bargain with the State to be released from military service which conscience says is wrong is, in the opinion of some, a smaller service than the absolute refusal to make such a bargain.

HARRY HILDITCH

The Grange, Wythall, Birmingham.

## NO RECONCILIATION WITH WAR

JOHN Middleton Murry's article in your issue of Apr. 9 makes it clear to me that the conditionalist objector sees war as a mere part of the general social problem and feels that it is only by constructive social work that war can be abolished.

The absolutist, however, I think sees war as the key to the whole problem of social improvement, and feels that war has first got to be eliminated before social justice can be obtained. The present efforts to build a better world, admirable as many of them are, he feels are doomed to failure if the foundation stone of the new world is to be victory in war. However strongly his friendship for his countrymen is cemented by the generosity of attitude they show towards him in these times, the absolutist does not feel that this can excuse his assistance, under direction, in the general effort.

I personally do not consider that war is a natural phenomenon of human weakness, and it is at least a controversial point whether or not the majority of people in the forces today either entered or remain there because of their "impulse to dominate" or because of duress and economic pressure brought to bear by the powers that be. If sufficient moral civil force can be conjured up to oppose effectively these strong interests, I feel that war can be abolished relatively easily, and that its abolition will at once necessitate a stronger moral approach to international and social problems than is ever likely to result from present trends.

Very definite lessons of resistance to war and violence can be learned from the leadership of Gandhi, Stauning, and de Valera, and it is to be doubted whether human nature in India, Denmark, or Ireland had to be elevated to such a perfect level as

some pacifists seem to consider necessary before participation in war can be resisted.

I do feel that if we stick to our Peace Pledge we must put renunciation and non-support of war first and not just feel that "war itself is not to be resisted."

PAUL D. ABBOTT

3 Defoe Av., Kew Gardens, Surrey.

## "Peace — and the Policeman"

Sybil Morrison is wrong. An international army would exist, not in order to punish the offender, but to prevent the offence. The question of punishment does not arise: the crime would be prevented.

JOHN F. GREEN

Fern Bank, Arthur St., Nottingham.

After re-reading "Peace—and the Policeman," I have failed to find an implication other than the task to create a proof of pacifism.

The police analogue is not so frightening if one remembers that the emergence of the modern police force coincided with the first Reform Bill. A new class had become enfranchised which required a more precise and limited force than the military to sanction social solidarity. Can we not anticipate a possibly similar evolution on the international plane? That such a force runs all the way of the moral spectrum, as Gerald Heard points out, is infinitely true: at the lower end it is the OGPU and the Gestapo; at the upper end it is a social organization aimed at subordinating the individual who disregards the equal rights of others for, nearly always, his own private ends.

To state these elementary truths does not make the problem of an apt force less acute; nor does it remove the onus of responsibility from the modern pacifist, which is to create in microcosm a higher and more conscious form of society. "I must create a system or be enslaved by another man's."

ERIC SANDFORD

## A PACIFIST AMONG ITALIAN

IT has been my good fortune to have worked for a year in close contact with a squad of Italian prisoners, sometimes driving them to and from their camp, sometimes supervising their work in the woods, and for a long spell eating and labouring all day with two particular men on tractor-work.

During this time, starting from a little Latin and less French, and aided by a good small grammar, I was able to assimilate the basic elements of Italian. I thus enjoyed many a long and penetrating discussion on the war and politics, besides the more obviously interesting things we had in common.

One of the men with whom I became particularly acquainted, had such a good sense of humour and detachment, and such a characteristically pungent utterance when roused to derision, that he was a perpetual joy. His great theme, which obviously finds its inspiration in an Ode of Horace, and which he sang cheerfully whenever feeling depressed, ended with this

## WORDS OF PEACE — 18

## The Statesman's Goal

WHAT is the explanation of this evil reputation which attaches, not to politicians of one party, but to the whole race? Primarily, I suppose it is due to the fact that ever since States began to be, they had been in peril and have trusted to force for their safety. War has been their normal history. Savagery has never been very far away from the realms of Law.

With war and the preparation for war go the stratagems of diplomacy, the dropping of the ordinary code of morals, a holiday for truth and an aftermath of cynicism. Force and fraud are in war the cardinal virtues. The statesman's goal is the preservation of the State, and reasons of State have been held to justify all policies whatsoever. In the arena of international rivalry and conflict, men have placed patriotism above truthfulness as the indispensable virtue of statesmen.

Baldwin,  
"Truth and Politics."

## Prisoners of War

couplet:

Se Domani caso'll mondo  
lo me tiro un po' più qua  
(If the world collapsed tomorrow, I should  
just step to one side).

The majority of these Italians were manual workers from the Southern provinces, and although I met, occasionally, a more educated man who hated war and could see through the mist of Fascist propaganda, and who had become a soldier "per forza" only, the average view was that the war was inevitable because only by fighting could an Italy, desperately needing open markets and colonies for development, assert her claims against England and America. These countries were determined to hang on to their grip on the world's resources which gave them such a higher standard of living.

When an Englishman said to one of these prisoners "War, no good," they immediately retorted: "Of course it's no good for you. You have something to lose by war; we have nothing to lose." They felt strongly that since Italy has only fruits, corn, and wine to offer the world they ought to be able to get their oil and steel and coal under the same conditions and in open competition with the other European nations.

## INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT

An expert on international between-war politics could probably decide how much of this is just and how much Fascist text-book history. I personally consider that, given the environment that these Italians have had, it is a right and just view, and one that must seriously be considered in any peace settlement.

An interesting demonstration of the importance of environment in determining politics was afforded by several discussions I heard between the prisoners and American-Italians in the US Army. Those Italians who had been born in America and who had lived their lives there tended to hold the ordinary anti-Fascist, pro-Democracy view. Those Italians, on the other hand, who had had experience of between-wars Italy, and had only recently become Americans, upheld the justice of the prisoner's viewpoint. And they pointed out that their emigration to America, from a lower to a higher standard of living, was an economic move; their love for

Italy remained constant.

The clearest point at which one could see Fascist propaganda was the aversion to the Bolsheviks, and often one felt obliged to point out that their hatred and fear of Bolshevism was echoed by English and American and Russian hatred and fear of Fascism and National-Socialism. And that, after all, if the Italians knew that a Fascist was not a monster but an Italian, with a faith he believed to be right, might it not be that a Bolshevik is an ordinary Russian similarly convinced that he is right?

## CONCLUSIONS

What are the conclusions that a pacifist can draw from an attempt to know and understand the Italians?

First, I think, an amazing hardening of conviction that Europeans are one family with far more in common than of difference. The gentleness, courtesy, love of family, love of country, of music and art, and joyous sense of humour which we have in common (one hopes) with the Italians is such as to render political differences unreal and imposed from without.

As Havelock Ellis commented on the Christmas truce of 1914-15, the sunshine of humanity is the reality; patriotism, mass dislike, nationalism are unreal labels which are ever ready to break into fragments when confronted with the basic facts of existence. The Italians put it this way—"after the war we shall be brothers, we shall forget the fighting."

But the tragedy is that the longer a war continues the more one's dearly loved cities are smashed to fragments, and one's dearly beloved friends cease to return, the longer it takes for the sunshine to peep again through the mists of propaganda and officially-inspired distrust which press and government of all countries can spread at will.

The second lesson is that there is among the Italians a very lively distrust of Democracy and Democratic countries and the motives which govern their policies.

We take it for granted that our policy is directed towards a more just and peaceful settlement of Europe. This is not in the least apparent to an Italian, who, besides being convinced of the unfairness of the pre-war distribution of world resources, believes that an Allied victory will merely perpetuate the unfairness.

## THE ONLY HOPE

There is only one hope—a generous and wise peace treaty (whoever should be in a position to impose it) exceeding in magnanimity that which Tsar Alexander gave to Europe after the Napoleonic Wars and which kept the peace in Europe for a longer period than we have witnessed since.

Only thus will the Italians be convinced that our insistence of justice and fair play, our belief in discussion as the best way of govern-

(Continued on page 4)

THE basis of the Peace Pledge Union is the following pledge which is signed by each member:

I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER.  
The address to which new signatures of the pledge should be sent, and from which further particulars may be obtained is:

\* PPU HEADQUARTERS, \*

Dick Sheppard Hse., Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

## Message from the Treasurers

THIS will appear at the time of the AGM, when all our members will be able to consider with sympathy and the desire to help the same financial problem as will confront the delegates.

Fortunately, the wonderful response last year to the Dick Sheppard House Appeal removed our greater anxieties; and we wished to be able to address no further special appeal to the generosity of our fellow-members till Autumn.

But this was expecting too much. The expenditure upon the various activities of the Union is carefully considered by the responsible Committees and by the Executive. These are cut down to the essentials; and it only remains for us to appeal for the financial support which the work renders necessary.

We have budgeted this year to raise £3,600 from subscriptions. That is more than last year. In addition, we hope for £1,000 from the Special Appeal in the Autumn.

So far, we have received much less than the monthly sum of £300 anticipated. Both the composite sums sent to us by the Areas and the individual contributions have slightly declined in the first three months of the year.

But April has brought a great improvement, and the Areas which sent us a total of £51 in March have increased it to £201 in April. Good work, Areas!

We realize that this sort of increase means real strain. The Nottingham scheme has been recently considered by the Areas and their treasurers, and a great effort is being made to work it quite loyally. This has involved the acceptance by each Area of a quota bearing an approximate relationship to total membership.

The North-West Area, for example, paid £83 to us last year. This year the quota will amount to £271, a sum which, as the Area Treasurer writes, it will not be easy to raise. All the same, they have, in the first four months, courageously sent us £100 on account. We are deeply grateful.

Yet, with all this splendid striving to assist us, as your National Treasurers, we are not out of the wood. We had to ask the Council, at its April meeting, for permission to withdraw £150, or half the small reserve banked against special emergencies. If, before Autumn, we are forced to draw on the remaining half, we shall be in an extremely serious position.

To protect the Union against that eventuality, we appeal earnestly for the help of all pacifists.

Contributions forwarded to your group treasurer will bear their proper share of group and area burdens. If marked "Urgent: in reply to the National Treasurers' Appeal," our share will be expedited. We hope, in its journey to this office. If you prefer, you can send direct to us at Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

ALFRED SALTER  
JAMES H. HUDSON  
JOINT HON. TREASURERS

## PRACTICAL POLITICS

A Statement On Immediate Political Issues

2D (post free 3d.)

PPU Bookshop, Dick Sheppard House,  
Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

## MAGISTRATE on "PERSECUTION" of C.O.s

"WHEN a man has been sent to prison for his religious convictions, there should not be a continuous persecution of him," said Mr. Willet Ball, chairman of the Bench, at Luton, Apr. 21, when John Oliver, aged 29, of Russell Rise, Luton, was sentenced to 14 days for failing to comply with a direction to do farm work.

It was stated that Oliver, a full-time employee of the Jehovah's Witness movement, had served 12 months for failing to report for his medical examination (E. Standard).

Ronald H. Smith and Audrey Smith, his wife, wardens of the PSU rest-house at 58 Oakley St., S.W.3, were each sentenced at West London police court on Apr. 20 to a £10 fine or a month's imprisonment for failure to register for Civil Defence duties. They explained that their objection was to being conscripted for fire-guard duties and that they had voluntarily performed such duties in the past. Neither paid the fine imposed.

On April 17, Arthur Raistrick, Chairman of the Northern Friends Peace Board, who was stated to be a Doctor of Philosophy, an M.Sc. in both engineering and geology, and an F.G.S., was summoned at Skipton for failing to comply with a direction under Defence Regulation 80B to attend at a Labour Exchange for interview. Dr. Raistrick, who is 46, and who refused to register for vital work, was formerly Lecturer in Geology at Kings College, Newcastle, and served long terms of imprisonment as a CO in the last war. He was fined 20s., which it was stated

he would not pay. The fine was, however, paid anonymously.

Corporal Kenneth Bingham, aged 21, of the R.A.O.C., went on parade without a rifle. He was ordered to get one from the store, but refused, saying: "I do not wish to take up a rifle" (reported the E. Standard, Apr. 19). Now Bingham has been sentenced by an Aldershot court martial to three months' imprisonment and to be reduced to the ranks for disobeying an order. Bingham said that he had no intention of being deliberately insubordinate, but felt that his action was the only way to bring his case to the notice of the War Office.

Norman Gaydon, of Croydon, who was imprisoned last year for refusing to be medically examined, was at Croydon police court on Apr. 20 sentenced to 3 months' hard labour for disobeying a direction to farm work (E. Standard).

The power of a National Service officer of the Ministry of Labour to override decisions of appeal tribunals was criticized at Sheffield, on Apr. 20, when Harry Alstrop, 35, moulder, Mons St., Sheffield, who was stated to have left work in accordance with a decision of an appeal tribunal, was summoned for leaving without the permission of a National Service officer. He was fined 5s., including 4s. costs (D. Telegraph).

### ADVISORY BUREAUX

Bradford.—Squire Tempest, 57 Park Lane, Bradford.

Minehead individual adviser.—Carl Wyatt, Clovers Church St., Alcombe.

Scarborough.—Arnold Robinson, 9 Park St., Scarborough.

South Wales Regional Secretary.—Walter Cawley, Llanishen House, Llanishen, Glam.

Towyn individual adviser.—Rev. Phillip J. Peregrine, "Aneidle," Llanegryn, Towyn.

The poster parade through Central London, which was to have been held on Saturday morning in connection with the Indian Freedom Campaign, has been cancelled.

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### ACCOMMODATION

FOR ALL properties to be let or sold in N.W. London and Districts, apply to McCraith and Brooks, Auctioneers and Surveyors, 44 Market Place, N.W.11. (Speedwell 9888, 3 lines), who will give special attention to the requirements of pacifists.

HUT OR CARAVAN urgently wanted on loan by Essex nursery for evacuated East End children. Use as staff accommodation. Box 863 PN, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

### EDUCATIONAL

FIND RECREATION and new power to serve through speaking and writing. Correspondence (also visit) lessons 5s., classes 1s. 6d. Dorothy Matthews, B.A., 32 Primrose Hill Rd., London, N.W.3.

### LAND & COMMUNITY

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IS THERE a pacifist farming who would consider taking an active partner (small capital) well experienced; worker? Or would anyone contemplating now or future taking own farm care to write: mutual help, ideas? Box 866 PN, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

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## Machinery and Morals

THE article by Wilfred Wellock, "Building a New Democracy," in your issue of Apr. 9, appears to me to be a prime example of sitting on a cotton-wool cloud and piping an "arty-crafty" tune on an escapist reed, notwithstanding the occasional "machine made" note. I happen to be involved in the technical side of furniture production and would say that it is sheer nonsense to suggest that if one wants to gain "utility and beauty" "the tendency would be to substitute craft for machinery."

Beauty and utility can be produced by hand but also in immeasurably greater quantities by machine, enabling many more to enjoy it. Bad articles have been and are being produced both by hand and machine but that is a question of morals, and it is just sheer moral funk on our part to side-step the greater issue raised by the use of the gift of machinery. Too many "back-to-the-landers" and self-styled medievalists escape rather than face the correct use of machinery: let them rather bend their wills and talents to the fact that man is developing his knowledge and use of the material world at an ever increasing rate.

Most engineers know that progress curves do not usually bend at right-angles and if, as I believe is true, man is entering ever deeper into the knowledge and use of material things with the inevitability of fate, then it is surely more constructive to attempt to guide machines in a moral manner; the opposite behaviour of "craftily" retreating or just tolerating a "teeny-weeny" bit of machinery can but aid and abet the chaos now evident, a chaos from which the voice is heard: "If you, Humanity, won't come intelligently (morally) through this material era, you, Humanity, will have to come in blood and sweat and tears."

J. D. A. BOYD

9 The Old Drive, Welwyn Garden City.

### LETTERS—Cont'd from Page 3

#### War & Economics

John Nibb writes that too many pacifists devote their attention to economics, whereas I claim that too few pacifists study economics. He goes on to state that if international trade were the cause of war, then, in proportion to its discontinuance, we might expect the prospects of peace to increase.

The difficulties of continuing under a system of private profit are increased by the shrinkage of trade and consequently the ruling class are forced to resort to war to expand the contracting international market and maintain their economic power.

The recent economic history of Germany makes this very plain.

W. A. CUNLIFFE

Greenford.

#### Italian Prisoners

(Continued from page 3)

ment, is genuine. Only thus will be corrected the impression that the first is wishful thinking covering further designs on markets and territories, and the second a weakness and dissension in our belief and unity.

That is to say that at a moment when a war-weary world will drop into an armchair and say "Thank God it's all over" there will be an imperative need for wise, generous, unemotional statesmanship which alone can lay solid foundations for peace.

If we pacifists are unshaken in our opposition to war, since we know so well that every condition and influence works against such statesmanship after a war, then we must not be less ready to mobilize every ounce of energy we have to turn the wheel of advance unwillingly over and on instead of allowing it to revert to its old oscillatory, diminishing movement watched by thousands of helpless praying Europeans. Our active service begins with the Armistice.

Percy Lovell

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#### SITUATIONS VACANT (Cont.)

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STONE BOWER FELLOWSHIP urgently needs women helpers; interesting work among elderly evacuees. Also male helpers for gardening. Community service; maintenance and pocket money. Burton in Lonsdale, via Carnforth, Lancs.

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#### SITUATIONS & WORK WANTED

ADVERTISING ARTIST (London) C.O. can undertake little free lance. G. A. Coombes, Ruby Villa, Sidmouth St., Seaton, Devon.

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### MORAL BANKRUPTCY

"Observer" writes

I HAVE sometimes been charged with being too pessimistic or too cynical about the better world to come: in particular my profound scepticism about international co-operation has been impugned. I would ask the optimists what they think of the opening speeches at the Bermuda conference. I consider them a revelation of the complete moral bankruptcy of the Anglo Saxon nations: plain proof that their pious professions mean nothing at all. Even the Observer (Apr. 25) is constrained to say:

"What is so terrible about these speeches is not only their utter insensitiveness to human suffering. It is the implied readiness of the two greatest Powers on earth to humiliate themselves, to declare themselves bankrupt and impotent, in order to evade the slight discomforts of charity."

That is the truth; and that is what is going to happen. As Robert Waitman says, concerning the reaction of the average decent American to the appalling complacency of the Conference:

"It was like a song heard in a past delirium; it was the outline for a too familiar nightmare. It was business as usual. With a sudden and awful clarity it recalled other conferences at other times which began and ended with the solemn certainty that nothing was going to be done. You thought in your simple way that the conference which we are just beginning to embark on would be different somehow? Here is the first of them, and here we are again. You can relax: nothing is going to be done: the mixture will be as before" (News-Chronicle, Apr. 25).

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### LITERATURE, &c.

QUAKERISM. Information and literature respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends, free on application to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends' House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

THE IDEAL GIFT for Humanitarians. "The Stammer of the Skies: a Bible for Animal Lovers." Compiled by Will Hayes from the Scriptures and Folk-lore of all peoples. Beautifully illustrated. Boards 5s., paper 2s. 6d., postage 6d. The Order of the Great Companions Hertha's Chapel, Meopham Green, Kent.

UNIVERSALIST PAMPHLETS. "Jesus and World Today," by Dr. MacGregor Reid. "Spiritual Leadership of Jesus," by Dr. Van Shaik. "They Kept the Faith," by Rev. Arthur Peacock. 1s. 2d. from Universalist Press, 57 Cavendish Rd., S.W.12.

### MEETINGS, &c.

URGENT rally to consider controlled food relief for Belgium and Greece, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., W.C.1. Sat., May 15, 2.30. Speakers: Vera Brittain, Emile Cammaerts, Dr. Helle Lambridis. Chairman: John Hadham (Rev. Dr. Parkes). Organized by Controlled Food Relief Committees.

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FRIENDS WAR RELIEF SERVICE needs volunteers for domestic, nursing, and cooking work in evacuation hostels, for practical work and social work. Write "Prsnnel," F.W.R.S., Friends House, Euston Rd., London, N.W.1.

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